Date 1-9-2011

**Discussion on the status and some unclear points of the NBPC project study sites**

**Members of the participant on the discussion:**

1. ‘ Amare Hailesslasie……………………..ILRI, India
2. Kebebew Ergano ……………………………….ILRI
3. Ayele Abebe………………………………….. MSc student, Livestock management
4. Bedasa Eba…………………………… MSc student, Feed sourcing and feeding strategies

**Discussion Points:**

1. The overall work plan and field arrangement for Bedasa’s and Ayele’s thesis work
2. Questionnaires development status
3. Field site set up

The discussion was held on Skype with Amare from India and other participants at ILRI, Addis Ababa; which lasts from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm. As the discussion points were inclusive of the concerns of all participants, the participants agreed to discuss on issues raised by Amare. Amare opened the discussion by offering greetings to all the participants.

**1: The overall work plan and field arrangement for Bedasa’s and Ayele’s thesis work**

Amare asked Bedasa and Ayele to present their overall work plan. Bedasa and Ayele explained that the first draft questionnaire was developed and they are incorporating comments from Amare and Kebebe into the questionnaires. Once questionnaires development is finished, the students are ready to conduct questionnaires survey in the field. Questionnaire survey will start latest by early November, 2011. Bedasa raised the plan for biomass sampling from grazing lands. Forage species identification and classification is a pre-requisite to estimate evapo-transpiration of each feed that will be used in Livestock Water Productivity (LWP) calculation. Amare suggested that Forage species identification and classification and sampling of biomass should be done between mid September, 2011 and first week of October 2011. Samples should be taken from upper land; middle land and lowland in all the study sites. In line with this, Kebebe suggested the importance of involving Ato Abate Tedla to assist in species identification and classification. Ato Abate has long years of experience in forage agronomy and has hands-on experience in taxonomic classification of forages species. Involving Abate is conditional on the availability of budget for his consultancy service. **Action point: Kebebe and Amare to consult Alan.**

Finally, Amare emphasized the need for familiarizing with the whole site structure: know number of household and livestock position in the livelihoods by moving in site during first two days during field survey.

**2: Questionnaires development status**

Amare and Kebebe pointed out the presence of a lot of overlaps in the questionnaires developed by Ayele and Bedasa. It should be sorted out and minimized so that it exactly fit the objectives of the research. The questionnaire should be based on the research problem and objectives of the proposal. It should be clear and short. Based on these comments and suggestion, the students agreed to finalize the questionnaires up to the first week of October, 2011. In line with this discussion, Kebebe suggested the sample size to be increased to a reasonable size that allows statistical analysis such as multiple regression. Accordingly, the participants discussed on the sample size and agreed to increase sample size to a reasonable size. It was also pointed out that the farm structure of the study sites should be clustered/ stratified.

**3: Field site set up**

Some confusion occurred during field visit to the study site set-up. Amare clarified the confusion in discussion. He pointed out that the watershed used for the hydrology study is a subset of the NBDC project study watershed. Therefore, MSc research should be based on the bigger watershed that comprises different farming system that represents the respective landscapes. Lastly the participants agreed to clear misconception on the study site set-up and that has to be indicated on the map clearly.

**General discussions and comments**

1. Amare pointed out that many of the comments, suggestions and assignments for Bedasa and Ayele are very important and constructive in their future career.

Some of suggestion (**action points) to Bedasa and Ayele** are:

* To read relevant literature to their research by downloading from the internet and ILRI library
* To prepare short presentations on our proposal in October in the presence of Amare in Ethiopia
* To use Kebebe as immediate contact person
* To read details of the spread sheet model-which helps in pinpoint the most important variables in the questionnaire development

1. Kebebe also pointed that he is happy to help the students in his capacity and work jointly with the students. Amare was also very much interested in Kebebe’s proposal that relates to LWP (optimization model for rainwater management interventions) and the outputs will be complementary to Bedasa’s and Ayele’s proposal and generally contributes to the overall NBDC project.
2. The discussion was concluded with remarks by all the participants with sense of satisfaction in the discussion and enthusiastic promises to work in collaborations.